Council Highlights: November, 1998

Fair Funding Grant announced

On May 5, 1998, the Minister of Finance announced $29 million in new funding to be phased in over three years, to recognize the contribution of Ontario universities that have increased student access to postsecondary education and enhanced their job opportunities. Details on the grant were released on November 23.

"The Fair Funding Grant addresses a historic funding inequity among the universities," said David Johnson, Minister of Education and Training. "By targeting the Fair Funding Grant to increase the number of teachers at the undergraduate level and to enhance their professional development programs, this government has shown its commitment to Ontario students."
The grant will be phased in over three years and will be shared by 11 universities – Brock, Guelph, Lakehead, Laurentian, Nipissing, Ottawa, Queen's, Trent, Western, Wilfrid Laurier and York – and the Ontario College of Art & Design.

Universities that qualify for the Fair Funding Grant must develop a five-year plan, which will outline annual increases in the number of faculty teaching undergraduate courses. The five-year plan will also give details on projects to improve the quality of teaching, including enhanced professional development programs.

New stakeholder committee to provide advice on student assistance

David Johnson, Minister of Education and Training, has announced the formation of a new Ontario Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance, in which COU will participate. The committee is being established in response to a proposal made by the Ontario Undergraduate Student Association (OUSA) and the Ontario Community College Student Parliamentary Association (OCCSPA). COU had written to the Minister indicating its support for the establishment of such a committee.

At the request of the Minister, the first order of business for the new committee will be to provide advice and input on the province's plan to create a new Canada-Ontario Millennium Fund for Students. In his letter advising of the formation of the committee, the Minister noted that he would like the committee to consider how this new program can:

- harmonize the patchwork of federal, provincial and institutional grants and loans
- offer income-contingent repayment to students
- limit student debt

In addition to OUSA, OCCSPA and COU, the committee membership will also comprise other key stakeholders: Association of Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology of Ontario (ACAATO); Ontario Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (OASFAA); Ontario Association of Career Colleges; Canadian Federation of Students - Ontario (CFS - O); Ontario Council of Regents for CAATS; Royal Bank; CIBC; ScotiaBank; and Ontario Parent Council. COU's representative on the committee will be Ken Snowdon, the new Vice-President of Policy and Analysis. The committee is expected to meet for the first time on December 17.

Five Ontario universities to participate in Provincial Auditor's review

In September, the Provincial Auditor requested the co-operation of Ontario universities for a review of institutional governance and accountability frameworks as part of its audit of the Ministry of Education and Training accountability for university funding. Five universities -- Brock,

Carleton, Nipissing, Ottawa and Queen's -- will participate in the Provincial Auditor's field work review of institutional accountability. Institutional contacts have met with the Provincial Auditor's staff to discuss their approach to and scope of the field work, which is expected to get underway in December and be completed by the end of March.

Visionary Seminar scheduled for February 3, 1999

The Office for Partnerships for Advanced Skills (OPAS), in co-operation with the Council of Deans of Engineering (CODE), will hold its third Visionary Seminar on February 3, 1999. The featured speaker will be John Sheridan, President of Bell Ontario. The seminar, which will be held at Wilfrid Laurier University and be broadcast live by satellite to a number of campuses, will provide a valuable opportunity for universities to invite industry leaders to campus to participate and to showcase relevant research and related expertise. It will also enable faculty and students to learn more about the future of the telecommunications industry and the types of skills that the industry will be recruiting. Most universities are participating through their Deans of Engineering; if you would like your university to participate, please contact OPAS at (416) 979-2165 3xt. 261.

Panel to review OCGS Appraisal Process

COU has appointed Dr. George Connell, former president of the University of Toronto and of The University of Western Ontario, to chair a panel that will carry out a review of the Ontario Council on Graduate Studies (OCGS). Panel members are Dr. Bruce Clayman, Vice-President, Research and Dean of Graduate Studies, Simon Fraser University; Dr. Janice Madden, Vice-Provost for Graduate Education, University of Pennsylvania; and Prof. Louis Maheu, Doyen, Faculté des Études Supérieures, Université de Montréal.

OCGS was first established in 1964 by the then Committee of Presidents of Universities of Ontario as the Advisory Committee on Graduate Studies. Two years later, it became OCGS. The Appraisal Process was established in 1968, with the current form of graduate program appraisal being implemented in 1982. Since that time, the process has been the object of one review, in 1985-86, to establish whether the process was credible and able to produce reliable judgments. Positive conclusions were reached on both counts.

The Executive Director of OCGS requested the review, noting that it is particularly timely because, in recent years, government, universities and external forces have modified the context in which the OCGS Appraisal Process operates. The review panel will provide advice to COU, within the context of the following broad terms of reference:

- the role and structure of OCGS
- the operation and efficiency of the Appraisal Process
- the credibility and value-added of the Appraisal Process

Member universities have been invited to make their institutional submissions to the committee by January 11, 1999, and Deans of Graduate Studies and Vice-Presidents Academic have been invited to provide individual input. The committee would also welcome letters from individuals who have relevant experience with appraisals in Ontario or other jurisdictions. Please direct letters to David Lyon, Project Director, OCGS Appraisal Process Review, Council of Ontario Universities, 180 Dundas St. West, 11th Floor, Toronto, Ontario M5G 1Z8.

Universities to review the new secondary school curriculum

The Ministry of Education and Training (MET) has approved of the COU proposal enabling its member institutions to review the secondary school curriculum. The plan, which has received

funding support from MET, calls for:

- the review of all new courses by each member institution using, at its discretion, departmental, decanal and institutional curriculum committees and other appropriate bodies, under the direction of a co-ordinator appointed by the Vice President, Academic
- the establishment of subject-area committees from COU's member institutions, who will be responsible for considering the views expressed by separate university groups when courses are refined
- the appointment of a central co-ordinator to supervise the process

Dr. Laura Selleck, who has a long and close relationship with COU, will assume the position of project co-ordinator. COU has also established a Task Force on Secondary School Issues to consider all concerns arising from the changes in the secondary school system and to provide advice about significant issues to Council and to its standing committees.

Ontario College-University Transfer Guide "goes live"

The first phase of the Ontario College-University Transfer Guide Web site (OCUTG) "went live" as planned on December 1, with all 17 of Ontario's universities and 20 of 25 of the colleges of applied arts and technology participating. The Web site – http://www.ocutg.on.ca – features over 1,200 agreements between Ontario colleges and universities. It provides information about institutional credit transfer policies, articulation and credit transfer agreements, and collaborative programs between Ontario colleges and universities that may be searched by agreement type, discipline or program, institution and geographic location.

Phase Two, planned for the new year, will request that participating institutions install credit transfer web pages on their own Web sites to provide more detailed information about the agreements p. sted on the central database and about agreements with out-of-province institutions. This project has been managed by the College-University Consortium Council (CUCC) in partnership with the application centres, which delegated the technical construction of the Web site to the Ontario College Application Services (OCAS).

Discussion paper to focus on relationship between Ontario colleges and universities

The College-University Consortium Council (CUCC) has commissioned Prof. Michael Skolnik of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto, to prepare a discussion paper on the major issues and options in the development of the relationship between Ontario colleges and universities. This paper will be submitted to the CUCC in early 1999 and will feature issues and options for system-wide credit transfer, protocols to support collaborative programs and limited degree-granting authority for colleges. Several research activities will bolster the discussion paper including a study of funding options that support collaborative programs.

Business and university leaders to attend biotechnology symposium

A symposium on biotechnology that brings together university and industry leaders will be held at the Ontario Science Centre on January 21, 1999. Co-Chaired by Dr. Bill Leggett, Principal of Queen's University, and Graham Strachan, CEO of Allelix, the symposium will focus on shared concerns regarding research funding, the curricula of university programs whose graduates seek employment in the sector, and continued learning for those working in the biotechnology field. The symposium, which was recommended by COU's Task Force on Labour Market Issues, is being organized by OPAS and the biotechnology sector's Human Resource Council.

CD ROM on Conflict Resolution in Project Management now available

OPAS has developed a multimedia program on "Conflict Resolution in Project Management." The highly interactive CD ROM is designed for corporate and professional clients and can be made available at a modest price to faculty teaching in this field. If you require more information or wish to order the CD ROM, please call OPAS at (416) 979-2165 ext. 259.

Continuing updates on visits made by COU President

Over the last month, COU President Ian Clark attended several group meetings to participate in discussions and to comment on several topics including the anticipated double cohort, future challenges and opportunities facing Ontario universities and some of the themes addressed at the Executive Heads' Retreat (COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS, October 1998).

Group meetings and events that Ian attended included the Committee on the Status of Women in Ontario Universities; the Committee on Space Standards and Reporting; the fall conference luncheon of the Council of Finance Officers - Universities of Ontario (COFO -UO); the Committee on Employment and Educational Equity; a meeting of the Deans of the Council of Ontario Faculties of Medicine with the Council Executive of the Ontario Medical Association; the Council of Senior Administrative Officers - Universities of Ontario (CSAO - UO) meeting; the Confederation of Ontario University Staff Associations (COUSA) Conference; the fall meeting of the Council of Deans of Arts and Science (CDSA) of Ontario; the Waterloo Advisory Council; and the Premier's Conference on Jobs and Prosperity held in Toronto.

He welcomed the opportunity to speak with college presidents at a recent meeting of the Association of Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology of Ontario (ACAATO) - Council of Presidents.
Ian continues to meet with various representatives of government, including the new Deputy Minister of Finance, Bryne Purchase.

Board Chairs meet

The Council of Chairs of Ontario Universities (CCOU), chaired by Wendy Cecil-Cockwell, Chair of the Governing Council, University of Toronto, held its first meeting of the academic year on December 10. One highlight of the meeting was an introduction to COU research that is underway to learn more about Ontarians' expectations of Ontario universities, and to consider ways of creating opportunities for students. Attending the meeting to share details on the project were Mike Gourley, PricewaterhouseCoopers, and Bob Richardson, Angus Reid Group.
Congratulations to Dale Patterson, Chair of the Board of Governors of Ryerson Polytechnic University, who was elected Vice-Chair of CCOU at the meeting.

Listing of committees associated with COU

The Council of Ontario Universities would like to acknowledge the many active committees, task forces, boards and commissions that make it possible for the Council to achieve its objectives.

Standing Committees

Executive Committee
Committee on Employment and Educational Equity
Committee on Government and Community Relations

Committee on Nominations
Committee on Policy and Planning
Committee on Relationships Between Universities and CAATs
Committee on Space Standards and Reporting
Committee on the Status of Women in Ontario Universities

Special/Ad Hoc Groups, Boards And Commissions

Ontario Universities' Application Centre Advisory Board
Ontario Commission on Interuniversity Athletics
Task Force on Labour Market Issues
Working Group on Prior Learning Assessment
Task Force on Secondary School Issues
Task Force on Degree Granting
Task Force on OSAP
Nurse Practitioner Education Working Group

Affiliates

Ontario Council of Academic Vice-Presidents
Ontario Council on Graduate Studies
Ontario Universities Public Affairs Council
Committee of Deans of Ontario Faculties of Law
Ontario Association of Deans of Education
Council of Ontario Deans of Engineering
Council of Senior Administrative Officers - Universities of Ontario
Ontario Universities' Council on Admissions
Council of Deans of Arts and Science of Ontario
Council of Ontario Faculties of Medicine
Ontario University Registrars' Association
Committee of Deans and Directors of Ontario Schools of Social Work
Ontario Council on University Libraries
Ontario Council of Library Schools
Association of Computing Services Directors
Ontario Council for University Lifelong Learning
Ontario Committee on Student Affairs
Council of Ontario University Programs in Nursing
Council of Chairs of Ontario Universities
Ontario Council of University Programs in Rehabilitation Services
Ontario Council on University Research
Office for Partnerships for Advanced Skills
Council on University Planning and Analysis
Council of Finance Officers - Universities of Ontario
College-University Consortium Council

COU Secretariat

Administration
Public Affairs
Research, Analysis and Policy
Office of Health Sciences
Office for Partnerships for Advanced Skills
Ontario Universities' Application Centre
Inter-University Transit System